



NEWS RELEASE



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Ad Council and U.S. Department of Transportation Expand Focus of Drunk Driving Campaign to Buzzed Driving

PSAs feature new slogan – “Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving”

NEW YORK and WASHINGTON, D.C., December 28, 2005 – After more than twenty years of the highly successful “Friends Don’t Let Friends Drive Drunk” campaign, The Advertising Council and the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) have expanded the focus of their Drunk Driving Prevention campaign to target “buzzed driving.” The new public service advertising (PSA) campaign is launching today to coincide with the holiday season, a time when drunk driving fatalities are at their highest.

Since the 1983 inception of the Drunk Driving Prevention campaign, and its recognizable tagline “Friends Don’t Let Friends Drive Drunk,” the annual number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities has dropped significantly. However, according to NHTSA, driving while impaired remains one of the most frequently committed crimes in the United States, killing one person every thirty minutes and affecting one in three Americans. In 2004, over 15,000 people died in crashes where a driver or motorcycle operator had a .01 BAC or higher and, of those, nearly 13,000 involved crashes where the driver had an illegal BAC level of .08 or above.

In continuing their efforts to prevent drunk driving, NHTSA and the Ad Council have evaluated ways to extend the reach of the campaign, which has been accomplished by focusing on individual responsibility in an effort to reduce impaired driving. The “buzzed driver” is one who drinks too much and drives, but does not consider himself a hazard on the roadway or a drunk driver because he believes his drinking is “moderate.” The expanded campaign is designed to correct that perception, by instilling the notion that if you are “buzzed,” you’re too impaired to drive safely. It will inspire a dialogue about and recognition of the dangers of “buzzed” driving and, subsequently, motivate people to stop driving “buzzed.”

“The Drunk Driving Prevention campaign is one of the most successful campaigns in our country’s history,” according to Peggy Conlon, Ad Council President and CEO. “Buzzed drivers don’t equate themselves with the drunk drivers that they would condemn, even though the statistics show that their behavior can be just as dangerous. I am confident that this new creative will continue to change the culture as it relates to alcohol consumption and driving and communicate to buzzed drivers that even a few drinks can have devastating consequences.”

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Created by Massachusetts-based ad agency Mullen, the new television and radio PSAs target men aged 21 to 34 because, according to NHTSA, 59% of the nearly 13,000 impaired driving fatalities last year were people age 21-34, with the overwhelming majority of them men. The PSAs feature people who are visibly drunk and should obviously not be behind the wheel of a car, and then show people who are "buzzed" and may not recognize that they are too impaired to drive. The ads conclude with the tagline "Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving." To view the PSAs, please visit www.adcouncil.org/campaigns/buzzed_driving/.

"This campaign is an excellent complement to the *Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk* campaign, and we're confident that it will be a successful addition to our program efforts," said NHTSA Deputy Administrator Jacqueline Glassman. "If we change the way people approach driving after becoming 'buzzed,' by causing them to think twice, we will save many lives."

The TV spots were distributed earlier this month in time to begin airing this week as part of a holiday roadblock developed in partnership with the Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB). The TVB is encouraging all local broadcast TV stations to donate airtime for the new PSAs through New Year's Day. A holiday roadblock for last year's Drunk Driving Prevention ads resulted in participation from stations in 86% of designated market areas. Furthermore, according to a Nielson study, 25% of viewers who saw the spots that week said they spoke to a friend or relative about drinking and driving,

"The power of the campaign is that it basically ambushes the viewer," said Michael Ancevic, Senior Vice president, Group Creative Director at Mullen. "Instead of preaching and pulling on heart strings, it behaves more like an alcohol ad that you'd see on a football game, but then it catches you by surprise. We need to suck you in with laughter and then make you feel that "Oh man I've done that" lump in your throat. It gets you thinking "I really can't be that person anymore."

Per the Ad Council's model, the PSAs will air in advertising time that is donated by the media. Since its launch, the Drunk Driving Prevention campaign has received more than \$1 billion in donated media support.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation, is responsible for reducing deaths, injuries and economic losses resulting from motor vehicle crashes. NHTSA investigates safety defects in motor vehicles, sets and enforces fuel economy standards, helps states and local communities reduce the threat of drunk drivers, promotes the use of safety belts, child safety seats and air bags, investigates odometer fraud, establishes and enforces vehicle anti-theft regulations and provides consumer information on motor vehicle safety topics.

Mullen

Mullen is a full-service agency and an independent brand within the Interpublic Group of Companies. Mullen's client portfolio includes General Motors, XM Satellite Radio, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, Stride Rite Children's Group, Progress Energy, TripAdvisor, Royal Ahold, Turner Broadcasting System, LendingTree, 3Com, T.J. Maxx, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, Sealy and Wachovia. Headquartered in Wenham, Mass., the agency operates offices in Winston-Salem, N.C., Detroit, Mich. and Pittsburgh, Pa. For more on Mullen, visit www.mullen.com.

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The Advertising Council

The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. Having produced literally thousands of PSA campaigns addressing the most pressing social issues of the day, the Ad Council has effected, and continues to affect, tremendous positive change by raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives. To learn more about the Ad Council and its campaigns, visit www.adcouncil.org.

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